

# **Weekly Police Beat for the week ending October 12, 2018**

## **The Federal REAL ID Act and Your Driver's License**

Congress passed the REAL ID Act in 2005. The main thrust of the Act is to require all states to comply with minimum security standards for the issuance and production of driver's licenses and other state-issued identity documents. This means that before a state may issue (or renew) a driver's license, the state must require a citizen to prove their identity with a variety of documentation. Additionally, the driver's license must contain several security features to make them much harder to counterfeit.

The REAL ID Act prohibits Federal agencies from accepting for certain purposes driver's licenses and identification cards from states not meeting the Act's minimum standards. The purposes covered by the Act are: accessing Federal facilities, entering nuclear power plants, and boarding federally regulated commercial aircraft. The good news is that Maryland is one of 37 states that have complied with the Act.

The REAL ID Act has implications for domestic air travel and entering certain federal facilities. The following is from the DHS website:

*Starting October 1, 2020, every state and territory resident will need to present a REAL ID compliant license/ID, or another acceptable form of identification, for accessing Federal facilities, entering nuclear power plants, and boarding commercial aircraft. This is what we call "card-based" enforcement. The card, itself, must be REAL ID compliant unless the resident is using an alternative acceptable document such as a passport. The Act does not require individuals to present identification where it is not currently required to access a Federal facility (such as to enter the public areas of the Smithsonian) nor does it prohibit an agency from accepting other forms of identity documents other than documents from non-compliant states (such as a U.S. passport or passport card).*

Below are web addresses to the DHS for more information on the REAL ID Act and to the Maryland MVA's page that explains what supplemental documentation you will need to bring along to get a new or renewed driver's license.

<https://www.dhs.gov/real-id>

<http://www.mva.maryland.gov/realid/index.htm>